Introduction: Standards and norms

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Chapter 1
Introduction: Standards and norms

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1. Norms and standards: The theme of the collection

This collection of papers is inspired by the work of Richard Watts, whose wide range of research interests is reflected in the topics covered here. An important theme in his work can be summarised as an academic concern for norms and standards in the English language. As these two terms may evoke different connotations and associations, we should first establish how the terms are to be understood in this collection.

We will start our discussion by looking at the entry for 'standard' in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. It contains many different subheadings; the one most closely connected to the theme of this collection reads as follows:

> B. 3.e. Applied to that variety of a spoken or written language of a country or other linguistic area which is generally considered the most correct and acceptable form, as *Standard English*, *American*, etc. (Oxford English Dictionary 1989, online)

This definition is closely linked to the following:

> A. 10. a. An authoritative or recognized exemplar of correctness, perfection, or some definite degree of any quality.
> b. A rule, principle, or means of judgement or estimation; a criterion, measure. (Oxford English Dictionary 1989, online)

These definitions are said to be figurative derivations of the definition given under the entry A. 9.a:

> A. 9. a. The authorized exemplar of a unit of measure or weight; e.g. a measuring rod of unit length; a vessel of unit capacity, or a mass of metal of unit weight, preserved in the custody of public officers as a permanent evidence of the legally prescribed magnitude of the unit.
> (Oxford English Dictionary 1989, online)

With respect to this definition, it is obvious that a standard measure must be authorized by some institution and that there is no room for any variation. Irrespective of what system of measurement a country declares as its

standard, a metre is always defined as the length of the path travelled by light in vacuum during a time interval of 1/299,792,458 of a second and the British imperial yard was defined in 1878 as the distance at a specified temperature between two lines engraved on gold studs sunk in a certain bronze bar. Milroy and Milroy (1985: 23) used the coinage as a similar example for standardisation in matters outside language, stating that "the coinage is strictly standardised so that there can be *no* variation in the values assigned to the counters in the system ... to ensure reliability and hence confidence."

In the figurative derivations given above, the authoritative component is already weakened and no longer a necessary prerequisite for a standard, and in definition B.3.e. there is no longer any mention of authority. Standard is defined as the variety "which is *generally* considered the most correct and acceptable form" (emphasis added). This definition, however, implies that beside the standard form its opposite must exist as well, which opens again the door to a discussion of variation.

The entry for 'norm' in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is closely linked to the notion of 'standard':

> 1. a. That which is a model or a pattern; a type, a standard.
> b. A standard or pattern of social behaviour that is accepted in or expected of a group. Usu. in *pl.*
> c. A value used as a reference standard for purposes of comparison.
> (Oxford English Dictionary 1989, online)

While the definitions of 'norm' in the subentries 1.a. and 1.b. treat the term as synonymous to the concept of 'standard' described in meaning A.10. above, meaning 1.c. is arguably more restricted and matches the description for 'standard' given in 9.a. above. In this reading, the actual benchmark is highlighted: It refers to precise, reliable values declared by an authority for special purposes, mainly in technology and the natural sciences. Hierarchically, the concept of norm appears to be entailed in the concept 'standard'. Practically, however, many laypeople as well as linguists use the two terms interchangeably.

While the concepts of 'standard' or 'norm' have a high currency in linguistic research in general, the way they have been treated in the different fields of linguistics is rather diverse. Most generally, we can say that what a standard or a norm constitutes in a specific context has to be defined as a point of reference. As the topics discussed in this collection cover a wide field in which the notions are of relevance, we also see different conceptualisations at work. The contributing researchers take up the challenge in

different ways and discuss original data and new research questions connected by their focus on standards and norms.

This collection is organized into three parts, each of which covers an important research field for the study of norms and standards: (1) English over time and space, (2) English usage in non-native contexts, and (3) issues on politeness and impoliteness. While these areas of linguistic investigation are by no means comprehensive with respect to the study of norms and standards, the choice was determined by the fact that Richard Watts has contributed significantly to each of these three fields of enquiry.

2. English over time and space

The first part of this collection covers topics on the English language over time and space with the notions of norms and standards in mind. The nine chapters loosely form three thematic subgroups: (1) standard and non-standard features in English varieties and dialects, (2) research on English standardisation processes and (3) issues of standards and norms in oral production. Before we summarise the content of the chapters, we will briefly introduce these fields of study.

Nowadays, according to Trudgill (1998: 38), there is a clear consensus among sociolinguists that Standard English is a dialect, i.e. "one variety of English among many. It is a sub-variety of English." This, however, has not always been the case. In the first edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (1933), the term 'dialect' is defined as

> one of the subordinate forms or varieties of a language arising from local peculiarities of vocabulary, pronunciation and idiom ... A variety of speech differing from the standard or 'literary' language.

This definition implies that the standard language is a hyperform of all the respective dialects. Furthermore it concentrates solely on regional variations in vocabulary, idiom usage and pronunciation, thus ignoring grammar as well as social differences.

This is contrary to the modern understanding that a "standardised language is a language one of whose varieties has undergone standardisation ... consisting of the process of language determination, codification and stabilisation" (Trudgill 1998: 35). Furthermore, Standard English is independent of pronunciation, register and style, which may have been standardised independently. Standard English is the variety commonly used by

the media, especially in printing, and employed in the educational systems for both native speakers and learners of English.

As the standard is often associated with the language of educated people, social variations are more important than regional ones. Style is normally linked to formality, ranging from vulgar to very formal, and it depends mostly on lexical choice. It is obvious that speakers may choose their words independently of the other features of language in such a way that they are appropriate for the social situation. The same is true for register, the vocabulary of which is determined by the subject matter or the activity a speaker is engaged in. In spoken language, we can thus encounter instances of Standard English in a very careful style within a special register, but pronounced with a very strong regional or non-native accent; while it is also possible to encounter instances of non-standard, casual English but delivered in the prestigious RP accent (cf. Trudgill 1998). Thus, if Standard English is not connected to a specific form of pronunciation, register and style, it must be mainly connected to grammar, i.e. to syntax and morphology. In addition, "Standard English is not a set of prescriptive rules", as Trudgill (1998: 38) points out.

The understanding of norms and standards by grammarians is closely linked to the concepts of prescriptivism versus descriptivism. Whereas there was an enormous increase in prescriptive grammars in the second half of the 18th century (Locher, Chapter 9), there was strong opposition to prescriptivism already in the Victorian age and especially in the first half of the 20th century by Bloomfield (1933) and the American structuralists. Modern reference grammars such as *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language* (Huddleston and Pullum 2002), *The Cambridge Grammar of English* (Carter and McCarthy 2006) and *The Collins COBUILD English Grammar* (Sinclair 1990) and even EFL grammars (for instance the *Oxford Practice Grammar* [Eastwood 2006] and *Advanced Grammar in Use* [Hewings 2005]) are in fact all descriptive. All these grammars are corpus based and thus reflect the present state of (mainly written[1]) English.

Huddleston and Pullum (2002) do not mention the term 'Standard English' at all and take a very clear stance against prescriptivism when they state:

> Our aim is to *describe* and not *prescribe*: we outline the principles that govern the construction of words and sentences in the present-day language without recommending or commending particular choices. ... We report that sentences of some types are now widely found and used, but we will not advise to use them. We state that sentences of some types are seldom encountered ... but we will not tell you that you should avoid them or otherwise

> make recommendations about how you should speak or write. Rather, this book offers a description of the context common to all such decisions: the linguistic system itself. (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 2)

Carter and McCarthy (2006: 5), on the other hand, claim that their book is a grammar of standard British English but state that "issues of acceptability are never far from the surface when there is reference to what is standard in grammar or in language use in general." They adopt a five-scale system of acceptability ranging from "acceptable in standard and spoken English (most forms are in this category)" to "unacceptable in all varieties of English (for example a structure such as *he did must speak*), such forms are excluded from this book." Most interesting is level 2 consisting of forms "acceptable in standard written and spoken English but not approved in more prescriptive grammar books." Their grammar is thus mainly based on acceptability and not on traditional, often Latin-based prescriptivism.

Much to the dismay of some traditional teachers of English as a foreign language, who would like to have a clear distinction between 'correct' and 'incorrect', modern EFL books have also abandoned prescriptivism to a large extent. Eastwood (2006: viii), whose grammar is based on the Cambridge International Corpus (www.cambridge.org/corpus) states that "[t]he emphasis throughout the book is on the meaning and use of the grammatical forms. The explanations of grammar are descriptions of how English works; they are a guide to help you understand, not rules to be memorized."

If standards in language are based on acceptability and not on any authoritative decree, how do such standards emerge? Unlike in other countries (e.g. France, Iceland and to some degree Germany), there has never been an authoritative institution that was licensed by the government to impose rules on English language use. As the first step of standardisation, as mentioned above, is language determination, i.e. the "decisions which have to be taken concerning the selection of particular languages or varieties of language for particular purposes in the society or nation in question" (Trudgill 1998: 35), the question is who takes these decisions in the absence of a legitimised authority? And after these decisions have been taken, how are they codified and made accessible to a wider public?

According to Milroy and Milroy (1985), "[t]he attitudes of linguists (professional scholars of language) have little or no effect on the general public, who continue to look at dictionaries, grammars and handbooks as authorities on 'correct' usage" (Milroy and Milroy 1985: 6). As the public

considers people who can write such books as highly educated and prestigious, they thus indirectly accept them as authorities.

With respect to the question of assigning prestige and authority to a variety, Quirk et al. (1972) state the following:

> Educated speech – by definition the language of education – naturally tends to be given the additional prestige of government agencies, the learned profession, the political parties, the press, the law court and the pulpit – any institution which must attempt to address itself to a public beyond the smallest dialectal community. ... By reason of the fact that educated English is thus accorded implicit social and political sanctions, it comes to be referred to as Standard English. (Quirk et al. 1972: 16)

It must be noted, however, that although the decisions taken were often arbitrary, stigmatizing certain forms and favouring others, they have become standard forms by virtue of being codified and accepted by the majority of educated people.

There have always been, and probably will always be calls for an English language academy like the Académie française (cf. Swift 1712), but with no success so far (cf. Milroy and Milroy 1985). Standardisation has always been instigated by individuals or institutions, whose work was then interpreted as authoritative at a later stage. The most successful of these were probably Caxton (1490) and Johnson (1755). Caxton complained about the varieties and the constant language change and expressed the need of a standard written form for printing purposes. The English variety he adopted for printing is seen as contributing to a standardisation process and has been influential ever since. Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language*, which was prescriptive in its realisation, on the other hand, has influenced English orthography so strongly (cf. Milroy and Milroy 1985: 34–35) that even today there is an indisputable consensus in matters of spelling throughout the English speaking world with basically "two minor subsystems" reflecting US or GB conventions (cf. Quirk et al. 1972: 16–17).

'Standard' with respect to oral production is closely related to Daniel Jones, who published the first pronunciation dictionary in 1917. Although he clearly stated that "[n]o attempt is made to decide how people *ought* to pronounce; all that the dictionary aims at doing is to give a faithful record of the manner in which certain specified classes of people *do* pronounce" (Jones 1924: vii, emphasis in original), we read in the editors' preface to the 16th edition that "it has become established as a classic work of reference, both for native speakers of English wanting an authoritative guide to

pronunciation and for users of English as a foreign or second language" (Roach, Hartman and Setter 2003: iv). With "certain specified classes of people" Jones meant "Southern English persons who have been educated at the great public boarding-schools" (Jones 1924: vii-viii), thus opting for a mainly social model, which he called PSP (Public School Pronunciation). In his function as a permanent specialist member of *The BBC Advisory Committee on spoken English* (cf. Schwyter, Chapter 9), Jones took a rather prescriptive position. Although this board only lasted from 1926–1939 and was never accepted as an authority, it "has made us think about notions such as 'standard', RP, 'correctness' more than ever before" (Schwyter, this volume: 188). The influence of the BBC Advisory Board on broadcasting and pronunciation may be parallelled with the influence of Caxton and Johnson on printing and spelling.

In the following, the nine chapters in part 1 on "English over time and space" are discussed in their three subgroups.

2.1. Variation in English varieties and dialects

The chapters contained in this section deal with phonological, morphological, syntactical or lexical questions of standard and non-standard features of the English language. While the first chapter by David Allerton discusses influences on Standard English as such, the contributions by Wales, Trudgill, Schreier and Pablé are concerned with the importance of (non-standard) dialect features. Such microlinguistic topics have been at the heart of much of Richard Watts' teaching over the past 30 years, both in a synchronic and in a diachronic approach. In addition, Watts was involved in a research project on Swiss English, which tackled the question of an emerging Swiss variety of English on the micro- and the macrolinguistic levels (cf. Watts and Murray 2001).

David Allerton starts the first block by studying "Swiss English, German English and American English: In grammatical alliance against traditional British English?" (Chapter 2). Allerton is interested in finding influences on standard British English that can be explained as being caused by either American English or by (Swiss-)German English influences. In particular, he studies grammatical patterns such as the use of the perfect, the replacement of auxiliary *have* with *be* before a past participle, unorthodox agreement in copular sentences, the lack of tense agreement in cleft sentences, "infinitivitis", and other features in order to discuss influences from other varieties of English on British English. Allerton argues that "in some

cases at least, grammatical Immigrant Americanisms, and in some cases even some German-Americanisms, are a plausible hypothesis" (24) for innovations in British English.

In the contribution entitled "Regional variation in English in the new millennium: Looking to the future" (Chapter 3), Katie Wales turns our attention from influences on standard English more globally to the local (micro-)level of variation, which is "summarily labelled 'non-standard', and traditionally stigmatised in comparison with standard grammar (and so often wrongly equated with 'substandard')" (61). Wales first gives a historical overview of linguists and language commentators who predominantly predicted the decline of regional variation in a general levelling and standardisation process and then continues to debate "the extent of dialect 'death' and the prognosis for degree of robustness in the future" (48). By examining the metaphors used to describe regional variation, the traditions in dialectology for representing dialect boundaries geographically and graphically and by investigating the urban variation in Yorkshire, Wales comes to the conclusion that regional diversity in speech is not in imminent danger of disappearing. She summarises that "[r]egional 'norms' do not necessarily mean homogenisation or fixity, any more than 'globalisation' does" and calls for more research on local patterns and tendencies in order to capture the continuous "process of 'hybridisation'" (62).

Peter Trudgill, in turn, develops the ideas of the micro and macro level with respect to the question of "The role of dialect contact in the formation of Englishes" (Chapter 4). He claims that, while language contact is often discussed more generally as having (had) an influence on the development of the English language, one should not neglect the importance of dialect contact. The reason for this, he argues, is that "dialect contact has more often than not led to dialect mixture and to what I have called new-dialect formation (Trudgill 1986, 2004)" (70). To exemplify this, Trudgill discusses three examples in more detail: Old English as a colonial mixed dialect, Middle English in Ireland, and the case of North America.

Daniel Schreier focuses on "non-standardisation" (Chapter 5) and discusses this topic in relation to St Helenian English (StHe). He stresses that "most off-spring varieties of British English have in fact not standardised at all" (85) and that speaking a non-standard variety in the English-speaking world is rather the norm than the exception. He then discusses the development of St Helenian English by tracing the importance of the English donor varieties, which all happened to be non-standard, and by offering suggestions for "disentangl[ing] the sociolinguistic complexity of a variety's initial stages and identify[ing] the principal donors that shape a

'new' non-standard variety" (86). Schreier covers data from the period between the 1660s and the late eighteenth century and summarises that the "StHE feature pool was quite diverse, containing donor varieties from England, continental Europe, Africa and Portuguese colonies in the Atlantic Ocean, as well as the Indian subcontinent and Asia" (99). Since the English input to St Helenian English was non-standard (identified as working-class southeastern British English), this emerging variety is found to have been "non-standard to start out with" (100). Like Trudgill, Schreier concludes that dialect contact "contributes heavily to the continuing spread of non-standard varieties throughout the English-speaking world" (100).

Adrian Pablé discusses the topic "From 'standard' to 'nonstandard' grammar. New England in the days of Salem Witchcraft and the Civil War" (Chapter 6). He is interested in establishing what grammatical features that are considered to be non-standard in present-day Standard American English, were acceptable features in the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries. His sources are the *Salem Witchcraft Papers* and Civil War correspondence. The features under scrutiny are, among others, finite indicative *be*, nonstandard *was*, nonstandard verbal *–s*, unmarked present and past tense verbs, etc. His conclusion is that the "spoken grammar of New England English was fundamentally the same in the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries", but that "[w]hat did change in the course of the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century was the social evaluation – from positive or neutral to negative – underlying these grammatical forms and structures" (121).

2.2. Research on English standardisation processes

The second group of chapters in the section on "English over time and space" contains work with historical data of the English language on questions of standardisation and the success of standardisation processes (cf., e.g. Watts and Bex 1999; Watts 2000). In the chapter "The rise of prescriptive grammars on English in the 18th century" Miriam Locher investigates the dramatic increase in the number of publications on English grammar in the second half of the 18th century in England. These texts are discussed in connection with the process of language standardisation since they propagate a normative, prescriptive view of language. Several interrelated factors are suggested to account for this increase of publications on English, one of them being the importance of the notion of politeness for social climbers, who believed that they could better their situation by learning to

use 'correct' language. In addition, one text by the grammarian Fell is introduced in more detail to demonstrate that many of the issues linguists deal with today, such as prescriptivism versus descriptivism, were already discussed in the 18th century.

Anita Auer presents research on the use of *lest* from Early Modern English to the twentieth century in her chapter entitled "*Lest* the situation deteriorates – A study of *lest* as trigger of the inflectional subjunctive" (Chapter 10). She discusses the inflectional subjunctive and in particular the conjunction *lest* as a trigger of the subjunctive by means of diachronic and synchronic corpus-based research on the actual use of *lest*, as well as by investigating comments on *lest* by prescriptive and descriptive grammarians over time. The results show that

> [*lest* + subjunctive] was still used in Early Modern English, then disappeared for 250 years, and it has experienced an enormous revival between 1985–1994 (the end date of the study). The analysis of meta-linguistic comments by grammarians and language-guardians exhibited that only eighteenth-century grammarians were particularly concerned with emphasising that *lest* necessarily required the inflectional subjunctive. (Auer, this volume: 165)

Auer argues that the prescriptive grammarians were most concerned with correctness and forming a standard usage of *lest*, while the grammarians of the Early Modern English period before still tried to come to terms with the concept of mood, and the grammarians after the eighteenth century "were concerned with distancing themselves from claims made by eighteenth-century *prescriptivists*" (166, emphasis in original).

2.3. Issues of standards in oral production

While the chapters in the first and second section of the part on "English over time and space" focused not only on phonological features but also on morphological, syntactic and lexical issues, the two chapters introduced in this sub-section are centred exclusively on the study of standards in oral production.

Jürg Schwyter presents work on "The BBC advisory committee on spoken English or How (not) to construct a 'standard' pronunciation" (Chapter 9). Schwyter focuses on the period from 1926 to 1939 and discusses the development and success that the BBC advisory committee had in standardizing pronunciation. He concludes that the advisory committee moved

through three phases, from a "strict and dogmatic prescriptivism" (186) to a "listening BBC" (187), i.e. the BBC was open to feedback from the general public and an enlarged body of experts, and finally towards "linguistic professionalization" (187). Schwyter maintains that the result of the committee's endeavours was not the standardisation of a fixed pronunciation, but the "emergence of a kind of 'broadcast English' or 'broadcast style'" and the general "raised awareness of language issues among the population" (187).

Franz Andres Morrissey explores questions of phonological style in recordings of popular music in his contribution entitled "Liverpool to Louisiana in one lyrical line: Style choice in British rock, pop and folk singing" (Chapter 10). In particular, he pursues the notion of an American reference style in music, a 'standard' that was adopted by many British interpreters. He traces the development of and deviations from such a style over the last decades and argues that there are several factors which influence style choice in rock, pop and folk singing next to socio-linguistic considerations, such as "musical genre, song topics and cultural considerations" (196). In addition, the aspect of performance and its impact on pronunciation, in particular the crucial element of sonority, is highlighted as a potential explanation for inconsistencies in style choice.

3. English usage in non-native contexts

The second part of this collection contains six chapters and is concerned with the study of English used in non-native contexts. The contributions by Bex, Dürmüller, Stotz and Strässler discuss aspects of the question of English usage in the classroom. The authors raise issues such as which standards of English should be taught in school and how standard and non-standard forms of English can be used, exploited and learnt in the classroom. These issues are discussed against the backdrop of the ongoing debate on teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and the use of English as a lingua franca (ELF), i.e. the continuing internationalisation of English in a global context (cf., e.g. Gnutzmann and Intemann 2005; Graddol 2006; Jenkins 2003; Watts 1990; Watts and Murray 2001).

In the first of these contributions, Tony Bex discusses "'Standard' English, discourse grammars and English language teaching" (Chapter 11). He presents a lucid discussion of the different points of view on what 'standards' should be used when teaching English to students in countries where English is not spoken and in countries where English is a native

language. In addition, he argues that corpora work, such as the CANCODE project, which, among other issues, allows linguists to study discourse patterns, are a great resource to study native speaker varieties of English, but that the results of these analyses should not directly flow into teaching of English as a foreign language. Bex thus takes up Phillipson's (1992) warning against transporting cultural beliefs and values together with language teaching and concludes that "the native-speaker English teacher has become an expensive irrelevance for those countries which teach English as a second language, and that such teaching should be restricted to countries which have English as a first language" (221).

Urs Dürmüller continues this theme with his contribution "Towards a new English as a Foreign Language curriculum for Continental Europe" (Chapter 13). Like Bex, Dürmüller discusses the problem of what 'standard' of English to choose in foreign language teaching. He claims that, due to the increase of the importance of English on an international level, the school curricula in countries where English is not a first language should be redesigned. By looking at one particular example of a teacher training college in Switzerland, Dürmüller identifies the issues and problems that arise in such a reformulation of the targets for teaching and he discusses the suggestions proposed, which can result in "a new orientation for EFL teacher training" (239). Dürmüller concludes that "English must be perceived as a truly international language, increasingly expressive of many and differing cultures, literatures and lifestyles, …" (251).

Daniel Stotz also focuses on a language situation in which English is a foreign language. In his contribution entitled "Immersion or integration? Discourses and practices in Swiss language classrooms" (Chapter 12), he traces the development of reforms in foreign language schooling in Switzerland. Stotz questions "the notion of standard, in particular with respect to the diglossic situation in Swiss schools, and points to the additional sociolinguistic complexities that the standard/dialect dichotomy introduces" (256). His argument is that

> while immersion-style provision of language classes may look like a persuasive solution to the school system's task of promoting students' multilingual competence, it comes with the inherent contradiction that it attempts to introduce, as a medium of instruction, standard forms of language in an environment characterised by various forms of non-standard use such as dialect, learner language and hybrid mixing of different varieties. (Stotz, this volume: 256)

Stotz exemplifies these issues with an analysis of classroom interaction and a discussion of a recorded information forum for adolescents and parents in a suburb in Zurich. In addition, special attention is given to the particular role assigned to English in Switzerland, which is not a national language, but which is perceived by many as an indispensable language for students to learn.

In his contribution "Can academic writing style be taught?" (Chapter 14), Jürg Strässler analyses and compares papers written by students of two Swiss universities at the beginning and the end of specialised writing skills courses. Using the QSUM technique (Farringdon 1996), which is one of the most widely recognised methods for attributing texts to specific authors in the framework of forensic linguistics, he shows that the standards for academic writing taught in the courses are so rigid that they leave hardly any room for individual features. Whereas the texts written at the beginning display a high degree of integrity and homogeneity, those written at the end of the courses lack these qualities. As this development runs counter to Farringdon's claim that each person's QSUM 'fingerprint' retains consistency across different genres, Strässler juxtaposes personal and academic texts written by two of the lecturers. As the same picture emerges from the respective analyses, we have to assume that academic writing is strongly influenced by a genre-specific standard, and that native and non-native academics experience similar difficulties (cf. Swales 2004; Devitt 1997). Strässler suggests that English has not only become the Lingua Franca in the globalised world of academia, but that a genre-specific writing style has developed to which native as well as non-native authors seem to adhere.

The remaining two chapters in the part on English usage in a non-native context focus no longer on questions of English in the classroom, but on two very different language situations. The first chapter by Adam Jaworski and Ingrid Piller deals with language employed in the tourism sector, while Elke Hentschel discusses the incorporation of English loanwords into the German grammar system. In their chapter "English in the Swiss tourism sector" (Chapter 15), Jaworski and Piller investigate language ideologies, and study "the linguistic knowledge about Switzerland that is produced and reproduced" in British newspaper travelogues (315). They found that Romansch, as the smallest national language, receives disproportionate attention, and that German, French and Italian are exoticised to a lesser degree and mainly used to refer to "local terms for local cuisine, landmarks or cultural events" (316). The travelogues do not report on any of the many immigrant languages that actual travellers are likely to be exposed to in the

tourism sector, such as Croatian, Portuguese, Serbian, or Spanish. The authors interpret this fact as a process of "standardisation" in the sense that "the travelogues do not in any way deviate from the official version of the Swiss linguistic landscape" (316). In addition, the authors argue that "English is naturalized as the language of tourism to Switzerland", as it is elsewhere (316). Piller and Jaworski conclude their contribution by stating that "tourism as a practice carries with it its own form of linguistic standardization" (316).

The final chapter in this part is by Elke Hentschel, who writes on "The rules of 'Denglish'" (Chapter 16). She studies the use of Anglicism in German Internet texts that are collected from the area of every day computer usage. She is interested in finding out how the users deal with the orthographical and morphological challenges of incorporating English loanwords into the German language system. Hentschel argues that "morphology and orthography, taken together, offer the best possible view on the development of new standards" (325). The term standard here refers to "naturally evolving rules" rather than to prescriptive norms (325). Overall, Hentschel demonstrates that, surprisingly, the verbs investigated showed a decrease in integration into the German orthographic and morphological system despite the fact that that the overall usage of these verbs increased in the time period studied (2003–2006). Hentschel concludes that "[s]tandardization … can neither be foreseen nor does it follow the rule that increasing frequency leads to higher integration" and that "additional, so far unknown factors play an important role in the development of new standards for foreign and loan words" (344).

4. Issues on politeness and impoliteness

Politeness research is another important field of linguistic enquiry for which standards and norms are a central concern. Richard Watts has been working on this topic since the late Eighties (cf. 1989, 1992, 1999, 2003; Locher and Watts 2005) and has contributed considerably to a re-evaluation of the seminal work by Brown and Levinson ([1978] 1987). In recent years, Watts has also turned his attention to the opposite of harmonious relational work and has started to look at impoliteness (cf. Watts in press; Locher and Watts 2008). Watts stresses that the study of politeness (and impoliteness) must entail the study of norms and standards against which judgements of politeness are being made by social actors of a par-

ticular discursive practice. He introduced the concept of 'politic behaviour' to the terminology of politeness research, which he defined as

> [s]ocio-culturally determined behaviour directed towards the goal of establishing and/or maintaining in a state of equilibrium the personal relationships between the individuals of a social group, whether open or closed, during the ongoing process of interaction. (Watts 1992: 50)

The concept of 'politic behaviour' highlights the idea of appropriateness, which is linked to *judgements* based on the norms of a particular interaction. Politeness, Watts argues, is a positively marked version of appropriate behaviour.[2] In this field of research standards and norms are thus seen as sets of expectations that serve as a framework for judgements on relational work.

Politeness and *impoliteness* are, in this view, evaluative notions that cannot be regarded without considering their context. This emphasis on in situ judgements on interaction by participants has added a new angle to politeness research. The focus of study is on first order, layperson's interpretations. The terms politeness and impoliteness are thus not used as technical terms for linguistic analysis, but are discussed in the light of the participants' understanding of what they might have constructed as polite or impolite behaviour in interaction. The stress is thus on the discursive nature of the evaluative terms, in the sense that the standards and norms against which such judgements are made are constantly being negotiated, confirmed or subtly changed over time. This negotiation of norms and standards adds a historical aspect to the study of politeness phenomena (cf., e.g. Watts 1999).

As a consequence of freeing the term *politeness* from its technical Brown and Levinsonian meaning, i.e. taking it again as first order notion, a slight shift in interest has occurred with respect to the study of interpersonal communication. While much of the classic politeness research concentrated on mitigation strategies, in recent years researchers have increasingly turned to the study of other aspects of interpersonal behaviour, such as impoliteness (see, e.g. Bousfield and Locher 2008; Bousfield 2007; Gorji 2007). It remains to be stressed that any investigations of the relational aspect of language focusing on first order notions will have to discuss the norms and standards evoked by the participants in an interaction.

In the third part of the collection the issues of politeness and impoliteness already touched upon in Chapter 9 on the prescriptive grammars (Locher) are taken up in two papers. The issues of norms and standards are at the heart of the contributions by Juliane House and the team of scholars

Mercedes Viejobueno, Carol G. Preston and Dennis R. Preston. In her contribution entitled "The role of politeness in discourse in English as a lingua franca" (Chapter 17), Juliane House studies whether the use of English as a lingua franca in interactions between members of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds can be called 'impolite', judged with native speaker norms in mind. She draws on data from three case studies that discuss interactions by non-native speakers who use English as their lingua franca. The results of the analyses show that the ELF speakers create their own habitus, or politic behaviour, which is particular to the interaction in question, and which does not seem to be perceived as inappropriate or impolite by the interactants in question.

In their chapter "How to be impolite: Rating offensive strategies" (Chapter 18), Mercedes Viejobueno, Carol Preston and Dennis Preston investigate impoliteness and rudeness rather than politeness. They thus turn to a field of research in which surprisingly little empirical studies have been done, given the enormous interest in politeness. The authors point out that impoliteness is so common that "a descriptive framework is necessary, but those that have been proposed are incomplete" (368). They then set out to offer a cross-cultural study in which they first established lay-people's evaluations of a set of interactions (such as *annoying, rude, impolite, mocking, mean,* etc.) and then, in a second study, they investigate how these terms are ranked by participants with respect to degree of offence. The results show that "the perception of direct and sarcastic offenses strongly depends on the face that is being attacked, the social distance between the interlocutors, or the interaction between these two factors" (382).

5. Concluding remarks

The theme of this collection is a discussion of the notions of 'norms' and 'standard', which are studied from a variety of angles, but always in relation to the English language. As mentioned above, these terms are to be understood in a very wide sense, allowing discussions of topics such as the norms we orient to in social interaction, the benchmark employed in teaching, or the development of English dialects and varieties over time and space and their relation to the standard language. The notions of standards and norms are equally important concepts for historical linguists, sociolinguists with a variationist background, applied linguists, pragmaticians and discourse analysts. We trust that this collection offers a unique view on

how the concepts of norm and standard are of importance in the different fields of linguistics touched on here.

Notes

1. However, it should be stressed that the majority of the corpora which these *Grammars* are based on predominantly represent written English. Since the written mode adheres more generally to the notion of standard English, much of the variation observed in the vernacular is lost (both with respect to lexical as well as grammatical features). Modern pedagogical grammars such as Hewings (2005) are innovative in that they also include sections on oral usage.
2. For thorough introductions to politeness research, cf. Watts et al. (1992/2005), Eelen (2001), Watts (2003) and Locher (2004).

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Part I
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